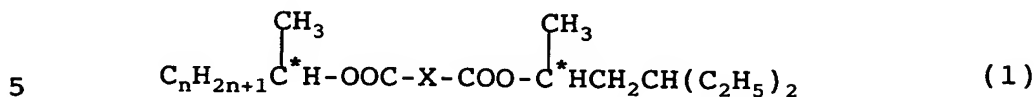


ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE:

An optically active compound of the general formula (1),



wherein n is an integer of 4 to 8, X is -Ph-COO-Ph-Ph-, -Ph-Ph-COO-Ph-, -Ph-OOC-Ph-Ph-, -Ph-Ph-OOC-Ph-, -Ph-Ph-Ph-, -Cy-COO-Ph-Ph-, -Ph-Ph-OOC-Cy-, -Ph-OOC-Ph-COO-Ph-, -Ph-OOC-Cy-COO-Ph-, -Ph-OOC-Np-COO-Ph-, -Np-OOC-Ph- or -Ph-COO-Np- in which -Ph- is a 1,4-phenylene group, -Cy- is a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group and -Np- is a 2,6-naphthylene group, and C* is an asymmetric carbon,

and a nematic liquid crystal composition containing the above optically active compound.

According to the present invention, there is provided a nematic liquid crystal composition containing the optically active compound having a helical twisting power (HTP) of 10 or more and giving a chiral dopant for a nematic liquid crystal, which chiral dopant has a property that the pitch of its induced helix decreases in length with an increase in temperature.